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PRESS ITEM FOR THE DCI

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0901 : GREY-DENSON:

LONDON, DEC. 16 (REUTERS)--BRITAIN TODAY NAMED JOHN DENSON, 42, A CHINESE-SPEAKING SENIOR CAREER DIPLOMAT, AS ITS NEW ACTING CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN PEKING.

A FOREIGN OFFICE SPOKESMAN SAID DENSON WILL REPLACE PERCY CRADOCK, WHO IS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE PEKING FEBRUARY ON COMPLETION OF HIS NORMAL TOUR OF DUTY.

INFORMED SOURCES SAID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION FOR THE TIME BEING OF APPOINTING A CHARGE D'AFFAIRES. BUT THEY EMPHASIZED THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT THE POST WAS BEING DOWNGRADED.

CRADOCK HAS ACTED AS CHARGE D'AFFAIRES SINCE AUGUST WHEN SIR DONALD HOPSON LEFT PEKING AFTER BEING CHARGE D'AFFAIRES FOR NEARLY THREE YEARS.

DENSON, SPEAKS MANDARIN CHINESE AND SERVED IN THE BRITISH DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN PEKING DURING 1953-55.

HE IS AT PRESENT ASSISTANT HEAD OF THE FOREIGN OFFICES FAR EAST DEPARTMENT.

DENSON IS MARRIED AND PREVIOUSLY SERVED IN DIPLOMATIC POSTS IN HONG KONG, TOKYO, HELSINKI, WASHINGTON AND VIENTIANE.

CRADOCK HAS BEEN IN PEKING SINCE JUNE 1966.
REUTERS AND AS/DM

Comment:

These comments represent the initial and tentative reaction of the Office of Current Intelligence to the attached item from the news services.